

## New York Tribune

First to Last—The Truth: News—Editorials—Advertisements.

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## Better Building Inspection.

In their efforts to simplify the horribly complicated system of building inspection, the various city officials and representatives of business interests who have been conferring on a proposed bill seem to have avoided some of the notable flaws of the Lockwood-Ellenbogen measure, which Mayor Mitchell vetoed. The proposal now evolved and awaiting the Mayor's approval places responsibility for inspection as to construction, alteration and structural changes on the Bureau of Buildings in the respective boroughs.

These borough inspectors are to do the work now done by the representatives of the Buildings Bureau, the Fire, Health, State Labor and Licenses departments. The local Tenement House Department is to retain all its present powers and jurisdiction, but its inspectors are to endeavor to work in harmony with the buildings inspectors. The Fire Department is to see that buildings, after occupancy, are kept in compliance with the building code, the labor laws and the orders of a new bureau—the Board of Standards—which is to be the supreme body as to inspections and building conditions, except for tenement houses. Also the Fire Department is to approve plans for buildings where combustibles or explosives are to be kept, and plans for fire extinguishing appliances.

Thus the corps of inspectors will be reduced from six to three, capable of working in tolerable harmony, of which only one, limited to a certain class of buildings, will be totally independent. The general scheme appears to be logical, but in the details there is at least one important flaw. The borough presidents have won the point for which they contended—that their local bureaus be maintained, instead of being consolidated into one central city department. The latter plan would probably be wiser, but in this as in all other matters the exigencies of politics take precedence of abstract theories of government. The flaw is that the borough building superintendents, who are to be the executives of the inspection system, under the proposed plan are to be also members of the supreme Board of Standards, to which appeals are to be taken. In other words, the buildings superintendents would sit in judgment on appeals from their own work. That, obviously, is wrong in principle and would be highly dangerous in practice, even though they would not constitute, voting solidly, a majority of the Board of Standards.

It goes without saying that this bill will not command public support unless it obtains the Mayor's formal approval. Even then, throughout its legislative course, it should be scrutinized thoroughly. Last year's measure started its career under glowing skies, but was soon proved to be full of jokers and impossible clauses, inserted to serve the selfish interests of persons whose chief complaint is not with inspection, even at its worst, but with the provisions of the existing laws. The various laws in question—the labor laws, the tenement house law, the building code—have been enacted to protect the public at home and at work.

It is possible that a rational system of inspection and mature experience may show places where equal safety can be obtained and assured under provisions less expensive to the real estate owners. That will be time enough to let down the bars. The public will not permit any bill to be passed, however great merit there be in its purpose, which by trick or indirection assails the standards of safety which have already been written on the statute books.

## Tips in Iowa.

More than half of us wish that tipping might go out of fashion—that on the one hand the vanity which demands obsequious service might disappear from human nature and that on the other hand the pride of social independence might assert itself above the desire for gain. A society that scorned tippers and tippees would possess a moral strength wholly admirable, whose influence would permeate and improve all its organized activities, civic, industrial and military.

But tipping has not gone out of fashion, and the more we prosper as a people the more firmly rooted the custom becomes, since money hasn't the happy faculty of stifling the moral fibre. But neither has legislation, the great quick remedy forever prescribed by our medicine men of politics. Which brings us to the anti-tipping law of Iowa, become famous recently through illustrious violation.

Since the enactment of this law, last July, after 150 state legislators had quarrelled over it for half a day, there has been just one arrest under its provisions—that of an unfortunate barber who accepted a dime and was fined \$5 (his corrupter was not brought to justice). And yet probably every minute of the day somewhere in Iowa that law is being violated. The legislators

who enacted it immediately violated it and continue to do so. All hotel, restaurant, barber shop and Pullman car patrons treat it as if it didn't exist. The law provides that hotels, restaurants, cafes, barber shops and shoe polishing parlors post placards in public view reading "No tipping allowed." A dispatch from Des Moines says the signs are so scarce they have become valuable as souvenirs.

This law has been just as successful in checking the practice of tipping in Iowa as Henry Ford has been in halting hostilities in Europe. And it has earned for Iowa law the same portion of disrespect that now greets the name of Ford. It is among the most ridiculously impotent of all the long list of impotent state prohibitory measures which have brought into popular contempt state legislatures and state law, and to some degree, too, the whole system of American representative government. Yet how many of us who laughed at the peace argosy continue to believe in legislation as a substitute for moral development? Perhaps, after all, Mr. Ford is not a bit more of an ass than the majority of his fellow countrymen.

## The Dove.

Once more we have "got the goods" on Dame Nature, and she stands convicted of faking. The Pittsburgh ornithologist, Norman McClintock, backed up by all the erudition of the Audubon Society, announces that "the dove is not a bird of peace, but one of the most pugnacious of feathered fighters. In fact, the dove fights a large part of his waking hours."

Of course, that might have been said of a Manhattan back-yard cat, or a telephone subscriber, or a joy-rider on the subway or elevated. Whether or not a deposit of soot on his snowy plumage has made a deep change in the character of the Pittsburgh variety, yet there goes another of our cherished emblems! Ever since that distant rainy day when old Noah flew his pet squab to this year of grace and strife, when the President sends abroad Colonel House and Henry Ford his floating dove, the symbol has lulled us as once, in pre-Victor days, did the cloying strains of "La Paloma."

It was Anatole France who cynically remarked that war consisted in stealing the pigs and chickens of peasants; but the war has stolen on this side the national emblem, and the eagle is now exhibiting the characteristics we once attributed to the dove. The aeroplanes from which the Germans drop their bombs are called Taubes or doves, while the Japanese have a pretty custom of releasing a flock of doves every time they launch a battleship against California.

From the dawn of history the dove has been a "messenger," while our poets, ancient and modern, have filled the bowers of Venus with his rhythmic cooing. And now we learn that those languorous sounds hide a deeper, more ominous note. Added to Doc Cook's discovery that the wild men of Borneo are not really wild at all, we may soon be nature faked ourselves, like the celebrated lady of Niger, into taking a majority joy-ride on that pedigreed feline from Fourteenth street.

## Opera and the Movies.

In opera, we know, all the arts must meet, mingle and work together toward one supreme impression—the art of the composer, the conductor and the singer, the art of the actor, the stage manager, the mechanic, the scene painter and the electrician. Even of the animal trainer. Witness the geese in "Koenigsliedner." To be sure, as yet it is only Gräbe that for who is "practicable," to employ a term of the theatre, in Wagner's bewildering operatic menagerie. His *scrum* and swans and the rest of them continue to be bald imitations. And after more than a hundred years the elephant in "The Magic Flute" continues to sway his canvas head (a bad habit in a howdah elephant, by the way) and to beg for peanuts in an effort at realism which deceives nobody. Compare his artificiality with the perfectly natural stolidity of the donkey in "Pagliacci."

But we are progressing. The day may yet dawn when Caruso will sing "O Paradiso" in a forest peopled with real monkeys and parrots—at least if a return to Meyerbeer be among the possibilities of operatic management and public taste.

But it is with the wedding of the arts of the singer and the player that we are concerned here. Shall he—and especially she—contribute nothing further to opera? Has the last word been said, has the apex been reached, in the collaboration of all the arts on the music stage? Having learned from Wagner that acting is of equal importance with singing and music, must our operatic artists abide by the standard thus set, and not draw upon experiences gained in a new art form, undreamt of in Wagner's own day? Shall one who has learned the technique of "registering" in the movie studios not enrich opera with all its resources, all its possibilities?

Miss Farrar has learned to "register"—that is all. Caruso's course in restraining her merely proves that opera, without our realizing it, was running in a rut.

The days are long past when the prima donna expressed her emotions by stepping to the footlights and handing them across to the audience from her corsage with either hand or with both. The days are past when the tenor confessed his love by smiling ecstatically over his high C and indicated his despair by throwing his head back, covering his eyes with his hands, and growing weak in the knees as he staggered off the stage. Wagner changed all that. But behold! What he began has been turned into rigid conventions again by Frau Cosima and Siegfried at Bayreuth. And now, suddenly, new vistas have been opened before us. The technique of the movies may yet come to revolutionize the Ring, as last week it gave novelty to "Carmen." It is so direct, so realistic—it has a "punch." Realistic, and yet, there is not more in it than that? Are not Miss Farrar's movie innovations perhaps sound art after all? Is

there more in them than met the eye and hit the stage at the Metropolitan and Caruso's cheek last Wednesday night? Is it not possible that the realism was meant to convey symbolic meaning? Was Caruso's wrestling-match with the lady of the chorus in the first act intended to foreshadow her treatment of Micaela later on? And was that flow sent after the rose flung in Don Jose's face meant to foreshadow her coming destruction of him, body and soul?

Are subtleties of psychological meaning to be sought behind the robust technique of the screen? Must we be educated up to them? Shall we in time come to see the value of the strong-arm methods of "registering" in the opera house? Is still another art to contribute its share to the perfection of the music drama?

## Plans for Water Wagon Week.

At a recent conference of the Mayor, the Health Commissioner and the City Chamberlain it was resolved to modify the plans made by the Health Department for what is styled an educational campaign against alcoholic excess. It appears that when this enterprise was first conceived the projectors had thoughts of invading cafes, barrooms, and even private clubs, if possible, in order to distribute tracts setting forth the dreadful consequences of overindulgence in strong drink. Now, on second thoughts, it has been decided to let the drinking places alone and to hand out the warnings in the ferry houses and in some of the lodging houses.

Nor is this the only change made. The Mayor is determined that the crusade, as it is called, shall be conducted on a plan strictly in accord with the functions of the Department of Health, and to this end he has undertaken to look over the advertisements and tracts designed to promote temperance. Some changes have already been suggested. A great water wagon, which was to be driven through the streets bearing placards of warning to drunkards, has been eliminated, and certain exaggerations and overstatements in the tracts have been either cut out or toned down.

These precautions are distinctly commendable. If it is necessary or desirable for the city to extend its benevolent activities in this way at all it ought to go about the business circumspectly. An example of the sort of folly that the Mayor has provided against is shown in this passage from one of the tracts: "Nothing is safe than is short of total abstinence." It has been deemed advisable to qualify this by prefixing the words: "For many persons." The difference is the difference between a fact proved by experience and an obvious falsehood. That something short of total abstinence is safe for very many is manifest to any unprejudiced observer. It is bad enough that, thanks to the activities of fanatical busybodies, preposterous nonsense about alcohol is taught in schools on the pretence of instructing children in the fundamentals of physiology. Were similar nonsense to be publicly countenanced by our Health Department it could hardly hope to retain the respect and confidence of the public. The public pays for these doubtful experiments and has a right to expect at least that they be kept within the region of common sense.

A "high official" says this government's "steps taken in the Lusatia matter have been comparatively simple." To a mind which could solve jigsaw puzzles, perhaps. Those Florida policemen who arrested Inspector Faure as a bunco man showed a lamentable inability to recognize the stigma of the craft.

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## Race Snobbery.

(From the Boston Herald.) In making family-to-family visits near the North Ferry an inspector found an elderly woman living in plain poverty on the second floor of a built-in tenement house. "Ganegs," she said. "Many enough since I came here twenty years ago. Then there were real folks all about. Now not a stove above me but bolts macaroni for Eyselians—not that I would speak to one of that kind; but I see them on the stairs."

It takes more than bare floors and alley outlook to keep a soul from rating itself above foreigners. This ill-fitting dislike of the outlander roots deep; it is a veritable instinct. Let a French or German boy take his place in an uptown school; the first recess is not to be before his name is "Frenchy" or "Dutchy" and his chance for comradeship a fighting chance. He finds only such welcome as is able to compel. The boys are against him as he is against the newcomer that they peck and pluck, or as wolves against the stray that tries to join the pack.

Until our half-helpless race, parted by the seas and divided against itself by speech and folkways and later by clash of wants, can meet and check its disintegrating instincts, it must expect war after war and then war. The sooner we all make it a matter of principle to discover the alien's good points and by neighborliness and fair play to let him learn, the sooner we shall be working for peace, and not where war craves respite but where alone world-peace can begin. Not till there's a blacker plague than war will there be snobishness more the devil's own than snobishness of race.

Who Says "Disarm the Ships"? Who says "Disarm the ships"?—give them as prey To glut the raven of a monster-breed That lawless courses in the deep sea lead! Strike we such bargain base? For these are they That, ruthless, did our friends and brothers slay— That boast them still of that accursed deed— That think, forsooth, our Honor may be feed, And we be silenced, if a "price" they pay! Disarm the merchant ships? And so, give way To a brute Power that hate and rage consume? Send other friends and brothers to their doom? Oh, rather, shall we not rise up and say, "This country's Honor will we not betray; No longer on her patience dare presume!"

EDITH M. THOMAS.

## PREPAREDNESS FIRST

## When Policemen Become Ploughmen We May Dispense with Army.

To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: "Dr. MacCracken said he knew only two ministers in New York who favored preparedness. One is a Canadian by birth and the other is an Englishman." This is from The Tribune's Washington news of yesterday at the hearing before the House Military Committee.

For the good doctor's enlightenment, here is one member of the Clerical Conference, not a Canadian nor an Englishman, but an eighth generation American, who believes in national preparedness. And I believe in it not to help the second term propaganda of a President "too proud to fight" for the American babies and their mothers at the bottom of the seas, but not "too proud to fight" for his own personal political profit.

I believe in such a programme of preparedness as shall restore respect for our government abroad and unite in enthusiasm all sections and races here at home. If the present Congress cannot work out such a programme, then the country will surely elect one that will, including a President whose preparedness is in something else than the dictionary. Some of us there are who agree with the dovecoats coo that "war is hell" and "of the devil, devilish." But we also believe that just so long as there is hell and the devil in human hearts there will be war, with the monstrous "frightfulness" and amazing logic to justify it and prevent it that this present war has shown us. When we can leave locks away our keys and our timepieces, turn our policemen into ploughmen and our jails into silos, then can we cease spending good American dollars for military, naval and aerial preparedness.

And I would like to see it begin in our public schools, with military drill or anything else that will teach our boys to live courageously, with only the fear of God in their hearts, and die valiantly, if need be, for "God and home and native land."

Dr. MacCracken once said to me, after hearing me preach a sermon on "Seek ye first His righteousness." "Well, my brother, you did put in the Methodist argument, didn't you?"

Perhaps he will think this as devoid of sense as that sermon—just noise. I still believe, however, in righteousness first, and a preparedness to maintain it at any cost.

A MEMBER OF THE CLERICAL CONFERENCE.

New Rochelle, N. Y., Feb. 10, 1916.

## Hotel Help Needed.

To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: I note with great interest the suggestion to Commissioner John Martin, of the Board of Education, by Copeland Townsend, owner of the Hotel Majestic, that vocational training in the public schools be used to solve some of the employment problems that beset hotel managers.

As is pointed out by Mr. Townsend, who has had wide experience in this particular field, there is invested in the City of New York \$500,000,000 in hotel property, and for almost every hotel person there is a hotel employee in some capacity.

For some reason or other the subject of domestic science in the public schools does not incorporate the preliminaries of the hotel vocation, and why?

It offers a lucrative field. Many of the positions offer from \$80 to \$150 a month and board, and in many cases incidentals such as laundry work, theatre tickets and other little privileges. The food in the larger hotels is of the best, and the environment is unusual.

Just now many young men who have been employed in various capacities in hotels have been called to Europe by the war. There is a demand for trained hotel help. It is dignified and should be placed in the curriculum of the public schools, in the humble opinion of the writer.

A HOTEL WORKER.

New York, Feb. 16, 1916.

## Honesty and the Job.

To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: As an honest, capable citizen victim of unemployment for at least two years, I wish, through your valuable columns, to ask a few questions of vital importance.

First, Why is it that good positions are usually found for prisoners and convicts on their release, while many of those with a clean record are refused?

Second, Why is it that the more serious a man's crime the more desirable is his work while in prison?

Third, Must a man become criminal before he gets his place in life?

Fourth, Should honest men be encouraged in their lifelong fight for a clean record, or must they go to their graves after making a brave but losing fight?

We occasionally hear of men getting release from prison whom the so-called prison reformers take in hand and find positions for which many an honest man may well long for. Now, this does not mean that I deprecate such noble work, but it does mean a strong protest against placing a premium on crime; provided, of course, the man who commits it has the money power behind him. Is this social justice or favoritism?

DENRY CHANCELLOR.

New York, Feb. 10, 1916.

## The Philippines as an Asset.

To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: The note by Hawkins on the Philippine question in your editorial page of February 9 is immense. It's rank treason to think of giving up our foothold in the Far East. I hope you can keep after this vital question daily.

The present Democratic Administration will go down in perdition because of this un-American idea of giving up the most valuable asset we have that affects our future as a world nation. The Alaska purchase at the time was a laughing matter. Look at it now. The Philippines are ten times more valuable to us as a nation, as well as in resources.

In no way have we given the Philippines an opportunity to grow and to show what their real value is and can be made for the United States. Wilson's weakness in this connection is pitiable, but it's the old Democratic story repeated of always doing the wrong thing.

J. J. SULLIVAN.

New York, Feb. 12, 1916.

## Mortality of Football Stars.

To the Editor of The Tribune. Sir: As a Yale man, I must take exception to John McF. Howie's communication to The Tribune concerning the mortality of Yale football captains.

Tom Shevlin died of pneumonia and to attribute his death in any way to football is as logical as it would be to say that football caused the death of Johnny Poe, the Princeton star, who was killed several months ago fighting for England.

Mr. Howie also shows his complete ignorance of Yale if he thinks that the fear of physical injury would prevent any Yale man from playing on the football team and thus being of service to his university.

CHARLES PARSONS.

Rhyolite, Nev., Feb. 7, 1916.

## THE GERMAN STEAM ROLLER

Now Flattening Out Belgium, Already Betrayed by German Spies and Ravaged by German Atrocities—Lies, Taxes and Enforced Work for the Conquered Are the Teutons' Instruments for Breaking the Nation's Spirit.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Germany uses three methods in turning a free nation into a vassal state. By a spy system, operated through years, she saps the national strength. By sudden invasion, accompanied by atrocity, she conquers the territory, already prepared. By continuing occupation she flattens out what is left of a once independent people. In England and North America she has used her first method. France has experienced both the spy and the atrocity. It has been reserved for Belgium to be submitted to the threefold process.

I have already told in these columns of the spy and the atrocity. This final method, now operating in Belgium to flatten her for all time is the most deadly and complete of the three. It is a calculated process to break the human spirit. People speak as if the injury done Belgium was a thing of the past. It is at its height now. The spy system, with its clerks, waiters, tourists, business managers, reached directly only some thousands of persons. The atrocities mutilated and killed many thousands of old men, women and children. But the German occupation and sovereignty at the present moment are endeavoring to denationalize more than six million people.

The German conquerors operate their steam roller by the use of clever lies, separating Belgium from her real friends; by taxation, thus breaking Belgium economically; by enforced work on food supplies, railways and ammunition, thus forcing Belgian peasants to feed their enemy's army and destroy their own army, and so making unwilling traitors out of patriots; by fines and imprisonment that harass the individual Belgian who retains any sense of nationality; by official slander from Berlin that the Belgians are the guilty causes of their own destruction; and, finally, by the fact of sovereignty itself, that at one stroke breaks the inmost spirit of a free nation.

## What the Peasants Endure.

One noon at Oordegem there was firing a couple of miles up the road. The inkeeper's wife was nervous. Her face was troubled, and she walked from one point to another of our group. We made an offer to the inkeeper. We said: "The Germans are at Alost. They are reported to be coming on this road. Does your wife wish to return to Ghent with us? We will take her in our car."

This was translated for her into the Flemish by our driver.

"When are the Germans coming?" she asked.

If they were coming at once, then she would like to fly with us. If they decided to go in another direction, then she would be more comfortable right in her own inn. She did not come with us. There you have the way they think revealed in one flash. That is the attitude of the peasantry everywhere. They cluster around the last outpost of Belgian troops, waiting for the Germans to come. "Perhaps they won't come, then why leave our house? If they do come, we'd like to take a look at them before running away from them."

In a burned town a stout man with a gray mustache of abundance talked with us. He stood twenty feet from a heap of ashes surrounded by a few pieces of wall. "That is my own house," he said. "What do you think of it?"

He was cheery and talkative. There was no gloom among the people. There was stolidity, a sense of bewilderment. In a few of the inhabitants there was a slight excitement. There was one woman who had remained in her house and watched the troops ride in past her window, and then had seen her town burn down around her, the row of dwellings in which she lived spared. She said the sight was alarming, that it had given her fear. Surely that is not an overstatement. It was amazing, the universal calmness of these people who have lost their relatives, their property, all the old landmarks of life. Think of rising each morning for, say, sixty years of life, like the owner of the house with whom we talked, and looking out on the familiar streets with their attractive half-moon curve, the familiar blade of a scythe, looking on the familiar faces of the white-fronted houses bright in the morning sun, and then in one day of hand grenades administered by house by house having that all accustomed aspect of life wiped out, so that you see a world that is wrecked so far as your own bit of it extends.

## The Hospital Burned.

Another old man, the one most moved in his emotions of all whom we met, told of the day of fire with his eyes showing pain, as if he saw over again while he talked what he had seen on the Saturday. He said that some of the leading men had run away before the Germans. He had seen his fellow townsmen shot, he had seen the sick removed from the hospital on the Rue de l'Eglise and carried to the ramparts, and then the hospital burned.

A handsome priest, perhaps six feet in height, walked a few steps ahead of us down the chief street, the Rue de l'Eglise. This street is, for seven-eighths of its extent, a ruin. As the open-faced young father picked his way over the heaps of burnt brick and rubble he pointed the way where we could safely step and warned us where there was danger.

"Yonder is my house," he said. He stepped up to a white plastered front, behind which there was nothing but a waste of bricks. He peeped through the window into the ruined interior, then he stepped back to us with a shrug of the shoulders and a smile.

"Nothing left; but what of it?" he asked.

A workman invited us into his little home. He called together his six children and wife, all well and smiling. They had remained through the devastation, and luck had been with them. After he had displayed his unhurt home, he led us to the twenty-foot square dirt back yard, and there in the earth were the black explosive dents of a shell. So close he and his had been to trouble. He smiled with amusement and showed the distance between his family and destruction. He measured the distance with his two hands, as one measures the length of a piece of furniture for removal.

"I gave them schnapps to drink," said another. "So I was not burned."

They raise their hat in speaking. They thanked me for calling on them. They wished me "Bon jour" and good luck.

The friend with me was talking with a peasant whose house lay in wreck. The man was staying with his sister's family, whose house had been one of the lucky 400 unburned. To his sister's house the peasant led my friend, and there they offered him coffee. They wished that the disaster should make no difference in the flow of hospitality to a stranger inside their town.

Another family led me to the rear wall of their house, where the cutting edge of a projectile had penetrated the roof and was jutting out beyond the brick.

"See," they said, "if it had exploded it would have been bad for us."

A dog was slowly starving in the rear of a house with an aviary.

"Do you understand dogs?" a young chap asked me. "Can you coax him out? He is dying."

I was still in Ghent when the Germans moved up to the suburbs.

"I can put my artillery on Ghent," said the German officer to the American vice-consul.

That talk is typical of the tone of voice used to Belgians: threat backed by murder.

## They Think Belgium Conquered.

The whole policy of the Germans of late is to treat the Belgian matter as a thing accomplished.

"It is over. Let bygones be bygones."

It is a process like the trapping of an innocent woman, and when she is trapped, saying:

"Now you are compromised, anyway, so you had better submit."

A friend of mine who remained in Ghent after the German occupation had German officers billeted in his home. Daily, industriously, they said to him that the English had been poor friends of his country, that they had been late in coming to the rescue. Germany was the friend, not the enemy. In the homes throughout Belgium these unbidden guests are claiming slavery is a beneficent institution, that it is better to be ruled by the German military, and made efficient for German ends, than to continue a free people.

The Belgian Legation has protested to our Department of State against the policy enforced by the Germans to make Belgian railway workers earn money for the Germans.

For a year our Red Cross corps worked under the direction and authority of the Belgian Prime Minister, Baron Broqueville. It is now in military command of us. The Prime Minister has sent to this country an official protest against the new tax levied by the Germans on his people. The total tax for the present year amounts to \$102,000,000. He writes:

"The German military occupation during the last fifteen months has entirely prevented all foreign trade, has paralyzed industrial activity, and has reduced the majority of the laboring classes to enforced idleness. Upon the impoverished Belgian population whom Germany has unjustly attacked, upon whom she has brought want and distress, who have been barely saved from starvation by the importation of food which Germany should have provided—upon this population Germany now imposes a new tax, equal in amount to the enormous tax she has already imposed and is regularly collecting."

After The Tribune article on the German spy system a Belgian wrote me:

"That spying business is not yet the worst. Since then the Germans have succeeded in outdoing all that. The basest and the worst that one can dream of, is it not, that campaign of slander and blackmail which they originated after their violation of Belgium's neutrality?"

Of course they did it—as a murderer who slanders his victim—in the hope to justify their crime."

## More Cruel Than Murder.

It is evil to murder non-combatants. It is more evil to "rationalize" the act—to invent a moral reason for doing an infamous thing. First, Belgium suffered a vivisection, a veritable martyrdom. Now she is officially informed by her executioners that she was the guilty party. She is not allowed to protest. She must sit quietly under the knife, but her sacrifice was not a sacrifice at all. That is the penalty paid for her own misbehavior.

That is a more cruel thing than the spying that sapped her and the mutilations practised upon her, because it is more cruel to take a man's honor than his property and his life.

"If the peasants had stayed in their homes wouldn't they have been safe?"

When they stayed in their homes they were burned along with the houses. I saw this done on September 7, 1914, at Melle.

"Didn't the peasants shoot from their homes at the advancing German army?" I saw German atrocities. The peasants did not shoot. It is the old familiar formula of the franc-tireur. That means that the peasant, not a soldier, dressed in the clothing of a civilian, takes advantage of his immunity as a non-combatant to secrete a rifle and from some shelter shoot at the enemy army.

The Bishop of Namur wrote:

"It is evident that the German army took the Belgian soil and carried out the invasion with the preconceived idea that it would deal with the Belgians as it dealt with the war of 1870. But German imagination will not suffice to create that which does not exist."

"There never existed a single body of franc-tireurs in Belgium."

"No isolated instance" even is known of civilians having fired upon the troops, although there would have been no occasion for surprise if any